



Visitors crowd the streets of popular San Marino.

A European collection — adding the 'elusive three'

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My incurable wanderlust derives from the dog-eared pages of my boyhood stamp album. Stickball street games and Mom's dinner calls went unheeded when I pored over the exotic specimens of my stamp collection.

Brightly colored perforated

squares and rectangles became fringed magic carpets whisking me off to faraway lands from Afghanistan to Zululand.

Pursuing the dream

As a young man I took jobs with airlines and travel agencies, want-

ing to be in the energizing environment of people on the move — and, of course, for the added benefit of trade industry discounts to distant destinations.

Then I became a travel writer and began journeying in earnest.

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"Undiscovered" were Andorra, the tiny principality tucked away in the Pyrenees between France and Spain; San Marino, the mini-state perched high in the Apennines inside Italy, and Albania, the little Balkan land sealed off politically for decades and now open to visitors.

Driven by my innate collecting urge and goaded by a peregrine passion to "see it all," I set out last summer to "collect" the three missing pieces in my European map.

ANDORRA

Though this microdot of a country lies almost hidden from view in the peaks and valleys of the eastern Pyrenees between Spain and France, it proved to be easily accessible once we arrived in Barcelona by air from New York.

Travel agencies in Manhattan had little or no advice on how to get to Andorra, suggesting only trains to the Franco-Spanish border and vague onward bus connections, a journey that could take unknown hours.

At the Estacio del Nord bus terminal in Barcelona, my wife and I boarded a plush, comfortable bus that rolled through the green Catalan countryside, gradually